

**A STYLISTIC STUDY OF CONVERSION IN WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE'S JULIUS CAESAR AND THE RAPE OF  
LUCRECE**

**by**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ  
لَهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ  
مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

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سورة الطلاق

## **Dedication**

This study is dedicated to my family and the Iraqi people whom I love and respect.

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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

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## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

In the following table, some abbreviations are going to be used in the present study, the researcher will try to explain alphabetically their meaning as they are normally used in English language.

Act	Active voice
Adj	Adjective(s)
Adv	Adverb(s)
ed.	Edited, edition, editor(s)
e.g.	Exemplum gratia (for example)
et al	<i>Et alii</i> (and others)
etc.	etcetera
EFL	English Foreign Language
ESL	English Speaking Language
Fig	Figure(s)
i. e	<i>id est</i> (that is)
Inc.	Incorporated
InTran	InTransitive (verbs)
LED	Longman English Dictionary
Ltd.	Limited
N	Noun(s)
No	Number
Pass	Passive voice
Tran	Transitive (verbs)
U.K	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States of America
V	Verb(s)
Vol.	Volume(s)
Vs.	<i>Versus</i> (against)



# **KAJIAN STILISTIK PENUKARAN ‘CONVERSION’ DALAM KARYA WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE- JULIUS CAESAR DAN THE RAPE OF LUCRECE**

## **ABSTRAK**

Penyelidikan ini merupakan suatu usaha untuk menganalisis stilistik daripada bahasa sastera yang digunakan oleh William Shakespeare dalam *Julius Caesar* dan *The Rape of Lucrece*. Tumpuan kajian adalah untuk mengkaji konsep penukaran yang mewujudkan idiosinkrasi dalam penulisan beliau. Shakespeare begitu mahir dalam permainan kata bagi ungkapan yang inovatif, yang menjadikan setiap stail atau gayanya unik dan berbeza. Olahan kata yang digunakannya berbeza daripada kebiasaan norma bahasa Inggeris dan daripada kebanyakan pengarang lain.

Kajian ini mengkaji penukaran kata pada tahap linguistik yang berbeza, iaitu leksikon, sintaks, nahu dan semantik. Bagi penukaran kata pada tahap leksikon, kedua-dua teks dikaji untuk menghasilkan jenis atau stilistik utama, seperti kata nama kepada kata kerja, adjektif /kata sifat kepada kata nama, adjektif kepada kata kerja, dan kata keterangan kepada kata kerja. Pada tahap tatabahasa atau nahu, data dianalisis untuk menunjukkan bagaimana kata yang telah mengalami penukaran dapat menyumbang makna kata yang berpotensi. Sementara itu, pada tahap semantik, makna dikaji untuk menonjolkan makna yang tersembunyi.

Kesan utama yang diterbitkan daripada penukaran kata dalam teks terpilih adalah sesuatu yang dijangkakan. Penyelidik menggunakan analisis pendekatan sastera Jakobson (1960) dan Leech (1970) kerana ia berkaitan dengan konsep yang dijangkakan. Pendekatan ini juga menambah objektif dan reliabiliti terhadap analisis. Kajian, berdasarkan aplikasi, menyimpulkan bahawa konsep penukaran kata adalah penting dalam karya sastera Shakespeare, kerana ia memenuhi keperluan bahasa

sastera dan ditandai melalui pilihan kata tertentu yang membangun stail Shakespeare.

Dapatan analisis leksikal dan nahu menunjukkan bahawa penukaran daripada satu kelas kepada kelas yang lain mematuhi sintaktik lazim dan korelasi semantik. Bagi kelaziman sintaktik penukaran daripada satu kata nama kepada kata kerja, di samping menepati kedudukan predikat verbal, ia juga mengikat kata kerja atau verbal fungsian. Dapatan ini juga mempamerkan makna perubahan kata yang berpotensi selaras dengan makna literal. Sementara itu, dapatan analisis tahap semantik menunjukkan bahawa stilistik atau makna perubahan yang tersembunyi adalah makna polisemantik. Makna stilistik ini juga selaras dengan makna utama, kerana ia bertindanan. Dicapat juga bahawa kebanyakan perubahan adalah sebagai alat stilistik yang dikaji dalam kajian ini. Metafor adalah yang paling prominen, yang menunjukkan keganjilan semantik. Diperhatikan juga bahawa Shakespeare menggunakan bantuan alat stilistik untuk mengubah bentuk linguistik, yang memberikan makna tambahan bagi interpretasi literal dan normal. Penukaran kata membantu penulis mewajarkan metafor dengan kata isyarat bagi menghasilkan kesan ironi atau satirik. Kajian ini juga merumuskan bahawa Shakespeare menggunakan penukaran untuk mengurangkan penggunaan abstrak dan ia membantu beliau mencapai banyak kesan yang dramatik.

# **A STYLISTIC STUDY OF CONVERSION IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S JULIUS CAESAR AND THE RAPE OF LUCRECE**

## **ABSTRACT**

The present research is an attempt to conduct a stylistic analysis of William Shakespeare's selected literary language in *Julius Caesar* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. The focus is on examining the concept of conversion which provides idiosyncrasy to his writings. Shakespeare is skilful in his use of word conversions which provides room for innovative expressions that makes his style unparalleled. He treats the literary stylistic devices of word conversion in a way that makes his style deviant from the English norms and different from the style of many other authors.

This study examines word conversions at different linguistic levels namely at the levels of the lexicon, grammar and semantics. At the lexical level, both texts are examined to present the main types or the main stylistic devices of conversion such as noun to verb, verb to noun, adjective to noun, adjective to verb and adverb to verb conversions. At the grammatical level, data is analysed to show how this level contributes to the potential meaning of the words that have undergone conversion while at the semantic level, meaning is examined to present the embedded or stylistic meanings of conversion which go alongside the literal or primary ones.

The main effect that is derived from conversions in the selected texts is foregrounding. Hence, the researcher employs the literary approach analyses of Jakobson (1960) and Leech (1970) since both approaches deal with the concept of foregrounding. These approaches also add objectivity and reliability to the analysis. The study, through application, concludes that the concept of word conversion is actually essential in Shakespeare's literary works since it satisfies the essential

requirements of literary language and is marked by certain choices of words that constitute Shakespeare's style.

The findings at the lexical and grammatical analysis show that conversion from one class to another follows the regular syntactic and semantic correlations. For syntactic regularity, conversion from nouns to verbs for instance, besides occupying the position of a verbal predicate take the syntactic ties of a verb or functional verbal ties. The findings at lexical and grammatical analysis also showcase the potential meanings of word conversion which go alongside with the literal meanings. The findings at the semantic level analysis reveal that words that have undergone the process of conversion have both a stylistic meaning which goes alongside with the primary meaning. It is noted that most of the conversions as stylistic devices which have been investigated in this study are, to some extent, foregrounded. Metaphor is among the most prominent ones that show a semantic oddity, i.e., foregrounding. It has also been observed from the works of Shakespeare that in foregrounding the linguistic form, with the help of stylistic devices, gives it an additional meaning beyond its literal and normal interpretation. The word conversion helps the mentioned writer to paint a metaphorical picture with word which in turn helps the writer create ironical or satirical effects. The present study also concludes that Shakespeare uses conversions in one way or another to make less use of abstract notions and this helps him to achieve many dramatic effects.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

##### 1.1.1 Stylistics

Stylistics which is a branch of general linguistics, is sometimes referred to as lingua-stylistics or the study of literary texts from a linguistic perspective or the study of linguistic choices in literary contexts (Simpson, 2004; Baldick, 2008; and Jeffries& McIntyre, 2010). In stylistic study, linguistic elements are identified and analysed as they appear in discourse. Leech (1969:1) defines stylistics as a study which focuses on the use of language in literature and asserts that stylistic analysis provides a 'meeting-ground of [both] linguistics and literary study' (ibid:2).

In other words, stylistic analysis looks at language-as-a-system from a functional perspective used to communicate meanings aimed at providing certain often desirable effects to the discourse. The effects come about through careful choice and arrangement of the language, often contributing to the pragmatic aspect of communication (Galperin, 1977). Similarly, the term *literary stylistics*, is used as a label in studies that seek to interpret and evaluate literary writings as works of art (Galleria, ibid., Jeffries& McIntyre, 2010). The term literary stylistics reflects the two main disciplines that inform such studies: literature and linguistics. Other labels have also been used to identify such studies. For instance, the term 'Linguistic Stylistics' has also been used in particular reference to a kind of stylistics which focuses on the refinement of a linguistic model which has the potential for stylistic analysis (Hassan, 2006).

As posited by Cureton (1992) and Stockwell (2006), stylistics or literary

stylistics is concerned with the aesthetic use of language in texts that have aesthetic elements such as oral narratives and poetry. Basically, stylistic analyses contribute to the study of various varieties of literary discourse.

From the definitions above, this study can conclude that stylistics mediates between two disciplines which are linguistics and literature. Basically, a stylistic analysis applies either the methods and insights of linguistics to resolve problems in literary analysis or applies the methods of literary criticism in the analysis of language. That is why some scholars like Fowler (1986) prefers to label such analyses as 'linguistic criticism' while others like Spitzer (1948), Fabb et al., (1987), Gavins and Steen (2003) and Stockwell (2006) prefer the term 'literary linguistics'.

The term stylistics first used to refer to a kind of language study between 1910 and 1930 via the contributions of Russian formalists such as Roman Jakobson, Victor Shklovskij; Roman philologists such as Charles Bally, Leo Spitzer and Czech structuralists such as Bohuslav Harvanek and Mukarovsky; British semiotists like I. A Richards and William Empson and American new critics such as John Crowe Ransom, T.S. Eliot and Cleanth Brooks. The contributions of these schools of thought played a big role in the development of a new form of analysis and affirmed the significance of the aesthetic use of language in non literary discourse ( For more information of modern stylistics, see 2.4).

Since the 1950s, the term stylistics has been used to describe critical procedures which attempts to analyse the language of literary texts using a more scientific and objective analysis instead of subjective or impression-based analysis. Hence, stylistics requires the researcher to classify the range of linguistic choices that are available to authors. These classifications may be applicable to a particular text or

number of texts to highlight peculiar linguistic characteristics. It also identifies the way in which features of the linguistics may draw the attention of the reader. For instance, features that deviate from accepted norms often tend to draw the attention of analysts.

On the other hand, the term 'style' is also used widely in literary criticism. It is used in reference to the characteristic or peculiar use of language in a specific text, author or period. Style shows the difference between different pieces of writing (Hassan, 2006). However, some scholars such as Adejare (1992), Stockwell (2007a) and Jeffries & McIntyre (2010) assert that style is an ambiguous term that is interpreted in various ways according to its usage in different fields. For instance, style is a form of behaviour to a psychologist, while it is concerned with the formal structures to the linguist. The main problem with the analyses of styles is that it is rather impressionistic.

Hence, modern stylistics approaches the question of style on a stricter, and more methodical way. It starts from the proposition that any idea or concept may be expressed in one of a number of different ways, and that an author exercises a choice (conscious or unconscious) that is dictated by personal taste or the demands of the reader or the genre of the written text. Hassan (2006) and Stockwell (2007b) claim that such a proposition is anathema to new criticism which refuses to distinguish between the form and content of literature.

Generally, stylistic analysis can be applied to both oral and written texts and involves the characterization of the linguistic features (or characteristics of linguistics) of such texts (Adejare, 1992). A stylistic study pays close attention to figures of speech, parts of speech, and devices and the effects of the devices on the

part of the reader. This research will employ a stylistic analysis which will aid in the interpretation of the potential meanings of words i.e. the meanings of words that have an additional meaning alongside their literal meanings (Chapman, 1973; Fromkin, et al., 2010; and Stockwell and Whiteley, 2013).

This research intends to study stylistically the literary language of the English literary writer William Shakespeare. The study's primary focus is to investigate the literary stylistic devices known as conversion in his selected works. Specifically, the focus of analysis is on the types of conversion, i.e., noun to verb, verb to noun, adjective to noun, adjective to verb and adverb to verb that creates a unconventionalness to the writings as a whole. In other words, the focus is on the selection of words that have been manipulated and used to convey particular meanings by Shakespeare such as the word "grace" in "*Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and **grace** his speech*" (JC III.ii.58) is used as a verb (for more details see chapter 4). Scholars such as Crystal (2005) and (2012) and Thierry et al., (2008) argue that Shakespeare's skillful choice of word conversions makes marks his creativity in language use, making his language rich, which in turn, has enriched the English language vocabulary as a whole.

### **1.1.2 Conversion**

The present study is an attempt to analyze word conversions in the literary works of William Shakespeare. The aim, here, is to establish the stylistic meanings of conversion that are likely to create a 'surprise' to modern readers as the skilful use of conversion often forces readers to work backwards so as to understand fully what the writer Shakespeare wants to convey (Crystal, 2005). As stated previously and as noted by many scholars like Leech (1969), Jovanovic (2003), Thierry et al., (2008)



and Crystal (2012) manipulation and careful use of word conversion in Shakespeare's work make his language unique and rich which in turn fructify English vocabulary and make English language peerless. The uses of conversion tend to create cohesion and coherence, i.e., the writer paints a metaphorical picture just through the conversion of single words.

It also makes Shakespeare's style different from the language norms of his peers such as John Donne (1572-1631), Sir Edward Dyer (about 1545-1607), John Lyly (1553-1606), Nicholas Breton (about 1545 to about 1626) and Samuel Daniel (1562-1619) (see 2.4). Generally, Elizabethan writers such as Samuel Daniel (1562-1619) also utilizes conversion, especially adjective to noun conversions in his literary writings. However, his main purpose is to personify inanimate objects rather than to create irony or satire as William Shakespeare had done (please see section 4.5). For instance, in the following example taken from Daniel's Sonnet XLVI. [" Let others sing of Knights and Palladines."]:

And these thy sacred vertues must protect,  
Against the *Darke* and times consuming rage. (Florio, 2014)

In the above example, the writer Samuel Daniel changes the word “dark” from an adjective to a noun which is evidence of personification as the word ‘dark’ as personification alludes to evil as a human trait.

However, scholars have argued that conversion to achieve the effect of personification is one popularly used in literary texts and this has been given much focus in many literary investigations. Scholars have argued that language, in general, allows room for the process of conversion to occur to serve artistic particular aesthetic purposes, i.e., word conversion gives a beauty of art to the text which in turn make the text more interesting, readable and enjoyable and also to attract

readers' attention to the use of such expressive and highly structured means of language, i.e., to pay attention to the ideas of irony and satire. Thus, this process can be said to foreground certain elements that is likely to draw the readers' attention. Foregrounding refers to an effect brought to the reader via linguistic or other forms of deviation in the literary work. Deviation in literary work, being unexpected, come to the foreground of reader's attention against the background of its normal linguistic features (Richard and Webber, 1985).

In the same respect, conversion is the term used to describe the process when a change is made to the function of a particular word (Blake, 1990). It is said to have occurred when its normal usage is deviated and the words take on a different word class, function, or meaning. For example, the normal class of the word *stone* is 'noun' but it is used as a verb as in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*: ***Stone*** him with hardened hearts harder than stones, (978). In this line, the word 'stone' seems to function as a verb since it takes the position of the verbal predicate and the ties of a verb like the imperative form which denotes "to harden" (please see Chapter 4).

In Jovanovic's view (2003:425) the concept of word conversion relates to the forming of words by changing the word class, function, and the meaning of a particular lexical item. This process is different from other conversions where a word changes its word class because of the addition of derivational affixes. For example, the two nouns derived from the verb "remove" in Early Modern English: "removal" (1597) is formed by adding the suffix *-al* to the verb, and *remove* (1553) simply by means of conversion (zero-derivation). Although there are no particular signs of nouniness in "remove" when it is listed in the dictionary, it behaves syntactically like any other noun. Just like "removal", it can take an article, appear in the plural, and complement a verb or a preposition, as in the following example:

Our horse also came off with some trouble, being wearied w<sup>th</sup> the longe fight, and their horses tyred; faced the eninies fresh horse, and *by severall remoues* got off without the losse of one man, the enimie following in the reere with a great body. (CEEC, Oliver Cromwell, 1643: Cromwell, 11) (Nevalainen, 2006: 64)

Another example the noun/verb “arm” can be converted into arms (plural), the past tense verb form “armed” or the progressive verb form “arming” and so on. The word “arm” can also be used as a compound noun as in “armchair” (Jovanovic, 2003). So, the forms derived from the base word “arm” (i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so on) are said to have undergone the process of conversion. This claim has been regarded as controversial by many scholars like Crystal (1967) and (2005), Jovanovic (2003), Kim (2010) and Thierry et al., (2008) since there is no difference in the form of the word although the lexical category of the word has changed from one class to another, i.e., the converted form of the word does not have any over affixes to distinguish it from the original one (Crystal, 2005).

Here, the focus of the present study is on simple words based on Jovanovic (2003), Thierry et al., (2008) and Kim (2010) who claim that many controversial arguments have been raised on studies pertaining to the use of conversion in English such as the directionality, precise definitions, approaches and productivity. To this researcher, the criticism associated with conversion analysis from a morphological or syntactic approach is of particular interest as there has not been any study that has looked at conversion as a process that can be occurred as a result of change within the same word class or a change from one word class into another, for example either from a transitive verb into an intransitive verb or from a noun to a verb. Hence, this research hopes to fill in the existing gap with this area of research.

From a stylistic point of view the English vocabulary can be classified into two

distinct groups which are words that carry denotations or have denotative meanings where there is a direct relationship between the words and the meanings they carry and words that have connotative meanings where the meanings are not obvious such as in metaphors and other literary devices. Words with connotative meanings can be classified into various categories such as colloquial words, slang words and so on.

Antrushina et al., (2000), Zyкова (2006) and Znamenskaya (2011), argue that there are three major layers of English vocabulary which are the common literary words, neutral words and common colloquial words. Znamenskaya (ibid) adds that neutral words can be used both in literary and colloquial language. These words are considered as a major root of synonymy and polysemy, i.e., these words have either the same meaning with different spellings or different meanings with the same spelling. In Quirk et al., (1985) it is stated that neutral words are mostly of monosyllabic character, i.e., words that have one syllable stress for example, '*contest* (N) and *cont'est* (V) but this is not the focus of the present study.

So far, this process of neutral words has encouraged the development of conversion as the most productive way of word-building as stated by Wales (1978), Blake (1990), Antrushina et al. (2000), Crystal (2005), Zyкова (2006), Znamenskaya (2011) and Kosur (2013).

Thus, English language, especially literary language is full of different types of conversion (that usually help the author to create internal rhyming within phrases or sentences): nouns to verbs, verbs to nouns, adjectives to nouns, etc. This process is also referred to as *zero-derivation*. Pinker (1994:52) observes that conversion plays a major role of creating new words in English language, adding that the process is one of the procedures that make English, vocabulary, 'English'. Ingo Plag (1999: 219) regards conversion as “the most popular of all verb-deriving processes as a subject of

linguistic inquiry,” and also states that most scholars like Berube (1996), Jovanovic (2003), Crystal (2005), and Thierry et al., (2008) consider this process as extremely productive in creating new English vocabulary. In this respect, David Crystal (2004) classifies it along with prefixation, suffixation, and word compounding as one of the four main sources of word production during the sixteenth century. To Fowler (2000: 181) conversion is an 'ancient process' and one which is 'exceedingly common'. For example in English daily life this process allows word play, as exemplified in the following example:

What did the sea say to the sand? Nothing, it just *waved*! (Davies 2004).

In English literature, conversion is widely used by authors of literary works to not only create new words but also to foreground their literary writings. In doing so, brevity of expression and certain stylistic effects like irony, satire, etc., is easily achieved (Jovanovic (2003) and Crystal (2005)). This following example where the word 'sentinel' is used as a verb in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece: To make the morn and sentinel the night*, (Luc. 942) exemplifies the above claim.

According to Crystal (2005), such conversions are used to for certain effects such as irony and satire or for the sake of brevity or to emphasise via foregrounding. For irony scholars like Gibbs (2007), Bogel (2009) and Kierkegaard (2010) note that the irony which refers to the use of words to convey the opposite of a literal meaning can be divided into three main kinds.

First: dramatic irony, which exists only in dramatic narratives, is not figurative language but a kind of strategy; it serves some significant distinction between what the audience knows and what one or more characters in the narrative know. For example in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (430 B.C.E.), Oedipus, the King of Thebes,

vows to find the murderer of the prior king, only to find out something the audience knew all along: that Oedipus himself is the guilty party. Incidentally, neither dramatic nor tragic irony is limited to plays; both types of irony may appear in novels, movies and other literary forms.

Second: situational irony derives primarily from events or situations themselves, as opposed to statements made by any individual, whether or not that individual understands the situation as ironic. It typically involves a discrepancy between expectation and reality, i.e., it includes a discrepancy between what is expected to happen and what actually happens. For example of situational irony is O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi". In "Gift of the Magi," both husband and wife give up their most prized possessions in order to give something to complement the other's most prized possession. The woman sells her beautiful long hair to buy a platinum fob chain for the man's watch; the man sells his watch to buy the woman tortoiseshell combs to hold up her hair.

Third: verbal irony is also called *rhetorical irony*, its core is a distinction between what is said, and what is intended, or really thought, i.e., a rhetorical device that involves saying one thing but meaning the opposite. It is characterized by a discrepancy between what a speaker or writer says and what he or she believes to be true. The significance of verbal irony is ambiguity. When one is ironic about a subject, one refuses to accept the usual view of it, and at the same time one does not fully denounce the usual view. Here, one does not know, precisely, where the ironist stands.

All these types of irony are important to this study in as they will help the researcher interpret the stylistic effect of irony which is achieved via word conversion in *Julius Caesar* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Through such categories, the

researcher hopes to make her analysis more objective and thematic.

However, in English language, any word class (i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and interjections) can be converted from its original form/class into another (form/ class) [to distinguish between the original and converted forms of the word one should pay an attention to the dimension of meaning between these forms (Katamba (1993) and Marched (1969)], e.g., from n-v, v-n, adj-v, adj-n, adv-v, adv-n, adv-adj, i.e., these are the main types of conversion that can be existed in English language (Bartolome and Cabrera, 2005). In the same respect, Calvert (2010) adds that structural class words like “ifs”, “buts”, ‘must’, “how”, “why” and phrases such as “ahas-been”, “a free-for-all” can also be changed to other part of speech. This study will focus on n-v, v-n, adj-n, adj-v and adv-v conversions because such conversions are more common in Shakespeare’s literary works (Wales, 1978; Reibetan, 2005; Thierry et al., 2008 and Crystal, 2012).

In this study, the focus is on conversion that does not include the addition of affixes. Such conversions occur without any affixes or have ‘zero affixes’. So, conversion, in the context of this study, occurs without any corresponding change in the form of the word. This is often regarded as controversial since the derived word does not have an overt suffix. Since, there are no affixes attached in the conversion process, Crystal (1967) argues that such conversions may confuse the modern reader of Shakespeare. In this study, the process of conversion in Shakespeare’s work is investigated via a branch of stylistics known as stylistic morphology which is “interested in the stylistic potentials of specific grammatical forms and categories, such as the number of the noun, or the peculiar use of tense forms of the verb ... or neologism formation by affixation and conversion, etc” Znamenskaya (2011: 11;106).

For instance, Leech (1960) who analysed the poem “The Windhover” claims that the word 'achieve' in “the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!” is a deviation and is thus foregrounded. This is because in the particular phrase i.e. “the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!”, the word 'achieve' which is normally used as a verb has been converted into a noun, thus, creating a deviation which is foregrounded against normal usage. The foregrounding occurs because the syntactic and semantic features of this item do not correspond with the contextual environment in which they appear.

In Wales's view (1989:182) foregrounding means that certain syntactic elements are highlighted or made prominent against the background of the rest of the. Thus, any linguistic feature (phonological, syntactical, or semantic) which are rarely used in ordinary language but deliberately used in literary texts can result in foregrounding.

According to Wales (1989:181) foregrounding can be achieved via two main ways: “deviation” and “repetition”. Deviation occurs as a result of violation of syntactic or semantic linguistic rules. For instance, unusual metaphors or similes (the traditional tropes) often produce unexpected conjunctions of meaning, forcing fresh realizations in the reader (for an example of unusual metaphors, please see metaphysical poet like George Herbert). Similarly, repetition via alliteration, parallelism or schemes involving repetition of lexical items can also foreground literary language. (for more details see 2.2.6 and 3.3.2). Thus, this study believes that repetition of conversion structures, for example N-V, V-N, Adj-N, Adj-V, and Adv-V conversions in Shakespeare's literary work serve to foreground the elements and therefore are important aspects to be studied.



However, Leech (1969:42) labels conversion as 'zero affixation' and regards it as one example of linguistic deviation, i.e., lexical deviation which occurs when “a lexical item undergoes a change in grammatical function without changing its form” as in the above example. Blake (1990:10-12) explains that “in dealing with language, words are the foundation of the interpretation of meaning” so the writer or the poet takes full advantage of vocabulary, particularly by compounding and word conversion in their writing. Hence, lexical conversion provides a more direct meaning than other (vocabulary) words do (Dita, 2010). Thus, literary writers often utilize word conversion to achieve stylistic effect as well as create aesthetic or artistic meaning which contributes to their style. For example the word *sentinel* as in the above example denotes “to premeditate/watch”. This use of this word here provides a metaphorical picture that something unusual will happen and that everyone should be careful and watch the event. In my opinion, this metaphorical picture attained via the word *sentinel* contributes to the writer’s style and makes his writings more artistic.

At this point and from a stylistic viewpoint conversion is considered deviation from the norm, and consequently, it gives prominence to what is converted (Thierry et al., (2008)). To some extent, this stylistic device is used to create effectiveness, emphasis, textual cohesion, reinforcement of meaning, and brevity. Its basic focus is to create cohesion by unusual conversions as using a word that has been used in the preceding sentence or discourse to show contrast is a means to achieve cohesion (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:88). In my opinion, the word ‘*sentinel*’ in the above example has been converted from a noun to a verb for the following reasons:

1. to create an effect on the part of the reader;

2. to emphasize the idea of sentinel/ ward of the night;
3. to achieve cohesion as it functions as a verb of the sentence and also takes the syntactic ties of a verb since it is preceded by infinitive verb “to make” in the first part of the sentence and preceded by the conjunction “and”. Hence, these two parts of the sentence work as a compound sentences. In addition, it also takes the phrase “the night” as its object. The semantic analysis of the word “sentinel”, reveals that it carries the meaning of “to premeditate/watch” not “guard” which in turn makes the meaning of the whole sentence acceptable although the conversion is considered quite unusual;
4. to reinforce meaning.
5. for brevity because the writer paints a metaphorical picture with a single word.

However, patterns of conversion may be considered deviant by unusual change or converting, not by unexpected choice (Thierry et al., 2008). To them the normal code can be foregrounded by careful and deliberate conversions, for instance, by converting a word from one class into another to achieve certain stylistic effects. So far, conversion analyses are important because conversions often affect the reader in an unusual way. In other words, this study regards that the analysis of how conversion contributes to the style of a literary text as important as clarified by Beaty and Matchett (1965: 13).

So far, this study is set on the basis of ideas from scholars like Crystal (1967), (2005), Janovonic (2003) and Thierry et al., (2008) that the concept of conversion as a stylistic element does not only work to change the word class, function and /or the meaning of words but also contributes to the beauty of author’s writings in literature

in general and in poetry, in particular. In fact, the study rests on the assumption that conversion allows authors to showcase their uniqueness that characterizes their literary works. At this juncture, it is equally important to note that many deviations are actually conspicuous and may also be found in daily use of language, non-literary language, business, commerce, religion and politics (Calivert, 2010).

However, the more common use of conversion is in literary language and Shakespeare's works showcase wide use of this stylistic device. Many of his characters use them as hyperboles to make deliberate overstatements or exaggeration that also serve to foregrounding certain actions (Walse, 1978) (for more details see 4.3.2). Hence, this study will attempt to investigate the use of conversion (lexical, grammatical and semantic) as a form of foregrounding in some of Shakespeare's selected works.

Thus, in literary language, conversion is common and should, therefore, be accepted without any prejudice with regard to its quality and/or validity. This study's findings provides adequate evidence that conversion is a linguistic phenomenon has an important psychological effect on readers or hearers (Short, 1996). For example, in any literary text, if a part is converted, it becomes especially noticeable or highlighted. This psychological effect is due to the effect achieved via *foregrounding*. In other words, word conversions will effectively foreground the features that are meant to be noticed, or highlighted by the author (consciously or unconsciously), because they are crucial for the reader's interpretation of the text.

Thus, the reader of the literary work can pick out the linguistic deviations as the most arresting and significant part of the message, and interpret it by measuring it against the background of expected patterns or accepted norms. Lexical variation include, among others, the following types: morphological conversion (nouns to

verbs; nouns to adjectives; adverbs to verbs) and syntactic conversion (uncountable nouns to countable nouns; transitive verbs to intransitive verbs; proper nouns to common nouns) which are often utilized as items of foregrounding in English discourse (Baker, 1967).

Hence, the present study will dwell on the parts of the literary lines taken from Shakespeare's works which are deviant through word conversion (morphologically and syntactically). These areas of language are, as Short (1996:19) clarifies situated in some ways on the borderline between grammar and meaning. In general, word conversion as the study will call it, can be ascribed to two main reasons: it may instance word class shift, i.e morphological process, e.g., from noun to verb, noun to adjective, etc., and it may instance a shift within the same word class, i.e syntactic process, e.g., from transitive verb to intransitive verb, from common noun to proper noun, etc. (Bauer, 1983).

To Crystal (1967) and Jovanovic (2003) a writer who employs conversions aims for a general recognition of the validity (by his readers) of his new and unusual sentences because this is the basis of communication. Moreover the notion of literary style is closely involved with deviation and analysts should be sensitive to the nuances of literary style in order to judge and evaluate them from an artistic point of view (Nowotny, 1960).

Theoretically, one can agree with Crystal (1967), Jovanovic (2003) and Dita (2010) that all conversion structures may be subject to form norms or grammatical rules in literary language and this phenomenon is simply exploited by skilful writers, in general and by Shakespeare in particular. In other words, they manipulate available linguistic material to highlight their style and surprise their readers by the

uncommon structures which are innovated intentionally. The tendencies to innovate is highly flexible and are often regulated by the large variety of structural variations and shades of meaning (Millar and Currie, 1982).

In practice, no one can reasonably analyse each and every way in which writers may deviate from the norms of their language (Millar and Currie, *ibid*). The aim in this study is, hence, to show the most predominant types of word conversion in Shakespeare's works since Crystal, Jovanovic, Leech (1969) and Thierry et al., (2008) all agree that examples of word conversion can mostly be found in Shakespeare's work in general and mostly in his tragic play *Julius Caesar* and in his poem *The Rape of Lucrece* to achieve certain literary effects (see 4.6).

Some examples of conversion found in *The Rape of Lucrece* are as follows:

1. they ... from their own misdeeds *askance* their eyes! (*Luc.637*)
2. he sits, / And useless *barns* the harvest of his wits. (*Luc.859*)

In the first example Shakespeare converts the adverbs 'askance' into a verb while in the second example he uses the noun 'barn' as a verb. As expected, these conversions give rise to new meanings. For instance, the word 'barn', in the second example, literally means a place where animals, harvest and old things can be kept, but in this poem it means 'store up in a barn' or 'gather in' (Crystal & Crystal, 2008) (see also 4.2.2 ).

This study also focuses on the syntax, specifically the structure of sentences, and the vocabulary that is used in verse of Shakespeare's works. In the analysis of the sentence structures, The study will pay attention to notions developed by stylisticians such as G. Leech and R. Jakobson which are relevant to the aims of this

study, i.e., both Leech and Jakobson discuss the concept of foregrounding in literary language and how this concept plays an important role in understanding and enjoying the artistic purposes of a literary piece (see Chapter 3, in particular 3.3.2 for further discussions on this).

### **1.1.3 William Shakespeare**

William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England and died on April 23, 1616. Shakespeare forged a literary reputation that is unsurpassed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Shakespeare began his literary career as a successful playwright whose work was well received by the people. He was not only able to establish himself as a playwright but as a successful poet as well as claimed by Gibbons (1993), Craig (2003), Frye (2005), Clemen, (2005) McDonald (2006) and Hinton (2008) among others.

According to Hinton (2008:1) Shakespeare's works have been loved and admired by scholars, actors, and everyday people because his works are interesting, exciting and relevant even till today. Hinton argues that Shakespeare has written some of the most beautiful lines that move his audience with his characters irrespective of whether they are heroes who portray courage or clowns who showcase their foolishness. For him, Shakespeare is a brilliant writer who knows about various subjects. His work reflects artistic imagination and he wrote with passion and humour.

### **1.1.4 Shakespeare's style**

Gibbons (1993) and Craig (2003) regard Shakespeare's literary style in general and his poetry in particular, as one of the most important innovations of sixteenth-century literature. According to them, his works are characterized by the simplicity

of sentence structures and use of common words. However, Shakespeare's use of these words provides curiosity in their use. Frye( 2005:105) shares a similar view that in poetry, Shakespeare used to elaborate one sentence to more than seven lines especially in his *Sonnet* and extend metaphor and conceits to make his language often 'rhetorical' that showcases his extraordinary command over the English language. Moreover, his vocabulary and syntax choices also denote his style and make his verse in particular 'stilted' as in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

Wright (2004:868) also claims:

Shakespeare's standard poetic form was blank verse, composed in iambic pentameter. In practice, this meant that his verse was usually unrhymed and consisted of ten syllables to a line, spoken with a stress on every second syllable. The blank verse of his early plays is quite different from that of his later ones. It is often beautiful, but its sentences tend to start, pause and finish at the end of lines, with the risk of monotony. Once Shakespeare mastered traditional blank verse, he began to interrupt and vary its flow. This technique releases the new power and flexibility of the poetry in plays such as *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet*.

A.C. Bradley considers Shakespeare's style as "more concentrated, rapid, varied and, in construction, less regular, not seldom twisted or elliptical" (1991:91). Shakespeare utilizes many techniques to achieve these effects, using for example, the obscure, complicated style and elaborated syntax, "run-on lines, irregular pauses and stops, and extreme variations in sentence structure and length" (ibid:92). In *Macbeth*, for example, "the language darts from one unrelated metaphor or simile to another. Thus the listener is challenged to complete the sense" (ibid). McDonald (2006:36-39) argues "the late romances, with their shifts in time and surprising turns of plot, inspired a last poetic style in which long and short sentences are set against one another, clauses are piled up, subject and object are reversed, and words are omitted, creating an effect of spontaneity".

To Frye ( 2005), in some of his early works, Shakespeare added punctuation at the end of the lines to strengthen the rhythm. He and other dramatists at the time used this form of blank verse for much of the dialogue between characters to elevate the poetry of drama. Many scenes in his plays showcased rhyming couplets, thus creating suspense. For example, when Macbeth leaves the stage to murder Duncan (to the sound of a chiming clock), he says:

“Hear it not Duncan; for it is a  
knellThat summons thee to heaven or to  
hell.”

Similarly, Wright (2004) mentions that Shakespeare’s plays also make effective use of the soliloquy, in which a character makes a solitary speech, giving the audience insight to the character's motivations and inner conflict. Among his most famous soliloquies are To be or not to be, All the world's a stage, and What a piece of work is a man . He (ibid) adds that Shakespeare’s character either speaks to the audience or speaks to himself or herself in the play. Shakespeare's writing also has extensive wordplay of double entendres and rhetorical devices (ibid).

In addition, his works have also been considered by the above scholars as controversial for his use of sexual puns. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, there were censored versions of and labeled as *The Family Shakespeare* [sic] by Henrietta Bowdler and her brother Thomas Bowdler.

Besides following the popular forms of his day, Shakespeare's general style is said to be comparable to several of his contemporaries. For instance, his works have many similarities to the writing of Christopher Marlowe, and seem to reveal strong



influences from the Queen's Men's performances, especially in his history plays. His style is also comparable to Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher (Crystal, 2012).

To Crystal (ibid) Shakespeare often borrowed plots from other plays and stories. *Hamlet*, for example, is comparable to Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum*. *Romeo and Juliet* is thought to be based on Arthur Brooke's narrative poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*. *King Lear* is based on the story of King Leir in *Historia Regum Britanniae* by Geoffrey of Monmouth, which was retold in 1587 by Raphael Holinshed. Borrowing plots in this way was not uncommon at the time.

Gibbons (1993), Craig (2003), Wright (2004) and Crystal (2012) state that Shakespeare's works also express the complete range of human experience. His characters were human beings<sup>1</sup> who commanded the sympathy of audiences when many other playwrights' characters were flat or archetypes. Macbeth, for example, commits six murders by the end of the fourth act, and is responsible for many deaths offstage, yet he still commands an audience's sympathy until the very end because he is seen as a flawed human being, not a monster. Hamlet knows that he must avenge the death of his father, but he is too indecisive to carry this out until he has no choice. His failings cause his downfall, and he exhibits some of the most basic human reactions and emotions. By making the protagonist's character development central to the plot, Shakespeare changed what could be accomplished with drama (see also 2.4).

### **1.1.5 Selected Texts**

#### **Julius Caesar**

*Julius Caesar* was written in 1599. The play is a tragedy that portrays the 44 BC conspiracy against the Roman Dictator Julius Caesar, his assassination and the defeat

of the conspirators at the Battle of Philippi. In short, the play revolves around the events after Julius Caesar's return to Rome after a successful war against Pompey. The Roman republic is ready to confer new honours on him which becomes a cause of concern and dismay among some senators who feared that this might lead to too much power for Julius Caesar. Hence, Caius Cassius plans to murder Caesar with the help of Marcus Brutus. Initially, Brutus is reluctant but he eventually agrees, being convinced that Caesar's death is necessary for the good of the republic. However, he rejects Cassius' proposal that Mark Antony, a close friend of Caesar, should also be killed. Brutus, Cassius and their co-conspirators stab Caesar to death at the senate house on the Ides of March. At Caesar's funeral Brutus addresses the people and successfully explains the conspirators' motives. However, Mark Antony speaks next and turns the mob against the conspirators, who are forced to flee from Rome. Subsequently, Mark Antony and Octavius, take command of Rome. Brutus and Cassius are defeated at Philippi where they kill themselves to avoid being captured.

This play is based on true events from Roman history, which also include *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Despite the title, and the focus on the tragic death of Julius Caesar, he remains a minor character who appears in only three scenes, as he is killed at the beginning of the third act. The protagonist of the play is Marcus Brutus and the main focus is on his struggle in facing the ideals of honour, patriotism, and friendship. Clemen (2005) and Duncan (2011) share the same view that there are three main themes in the play which are: honour, patriotism, and friendship. The section below will briefly discuss the three themes.

a. Honour: although there's lots of violence in the play, the idea of honour is not merely based on physical strength and fighting ability: many characters feel

compelled to mask any traditionally "weak" emotions, like fear and sadness, as well as their personal desires and, to an extent, free will. Brutus, for instance, feels compelled to give way to the logic that demands Caesar's death, even though he loves Caesar and is repelled by the idea emotionally. Caesar himself must go to the Capitol even though he suspects that something is not right, because he believes that death *"will come when it will come."* (II.ii.37).

The willingness to abandon self-interest, to brave pain and death for the good of Rome, or to avoid dishonor, is essential to gaining respect. This "virtue" is what made Brutus to agree to the plot, and also in his decision to commit suicide, in the end. Another example of honour can be seen via Portia's character. Being ashamed of her female identity, she stabs herself in the thigh to prove she can be trusted, and eventually kills herself in the most painful way she can imagine. (Duncan, 2011).

b. Patriotism: This trait can be seen via Brutus who has to decide whether or not to join the conspiracy, which is to kill his best friend Caesar or let him get crowned king. Brutus decides to join the conspirators and help kill Julius Caesar. His actions show that he is a very patriotic, one who loves his country and upholds its interests, citizen of Rome. First, he shows great courage in killing Caesar for the love of his country. Second, all the people of Rome adore him because of his loyalty and finally, Brutus is willing to stand up to the fact that he helped kill Julius Caesar for the sake of Rome (Durband, 2014).

Similarly, Ludowyk (2011) states that there are two reasons to think that Brutus, for example, is patriotic. First, he kills Caesar for the sake of Rome. He knows that Caesar would have taken over Rome and made bad decisions for the citizens or

Rome. "*It must be by death: and, for my part, I know no personal cause to spurn at him, but for the general. He would be crown'd*"(II.i.10-12) Brutus also knows that it is for the best of Rome for Caesar to be killed. He told the people of Rome that he loved Caesar but loved Rome more. "*... not that I loved Caesar less, but I loved Rome more.*"(III.ii 22-23) That shows that he wants the best for as most people as possible: "*Had you rather Caesar were living, and die slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen?*" (III.ii. 23-25).

Second, all of the people of Rome loved him. They loved him before the death of Julius Caesar and they still love him. "*Live, Brutus! Live, live!*"(III.ii.48). They believe that he has done the right thing for Rome and think they he is a hero. "*Give him a statue with his ancestors*"(III.ii.50).

c. Friendship: Brutus, Decius, and all the other conspirators use friendship to blind Julius from the truth, from finding out the plot against him. Caesar trusted his friends, a key characteristic to all friendships. Although Caesar killed by his friends, friendship is a strong theme and Julius is blinded by this and is betrayed by Decius, Brutus, and the others. Decius uses persuasion and flattery to form a strong union with Caesar. For example, Decius says "*Caesar, all hail! Good morrow, worthy Caesar.*" (II.ii.58) Decius also refers to Caesar as "*most mighty*"(II.ii.68). This makes Caesar comfortable and he loses his feelings of doubt. Decius cheats Julius into thinking that they have a flexible friendship by the use of deceptive words.

Overall, Julius Caesar has a rich plot, well moulded characters, significant incidents and dense description. However, it is considered unpoetic when it is compared to Shakespeare's usual language as claimed by scholars such as Craig (2003), Frye( 2005) and Clemen (2005) who regard this play as styleless,